AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): ~~Using a local anesthetic or a mixture of several local anesthetics in preparing~~ A method for treating post-operative joint pain, the method comprising:

providing an agent for treating joint ~~pains, wherein~~

~~(A) the local anesthetic or the mixture of local anesthetics is~~ pain comprising a neurotoxic substance dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent, ~~and~~

~~(B) the local anesthetic is selected from a group that is toxic to axons and~~ wherein said neurotoxic substance is predominantly toxic to nociceptive nerve ~~endings~~ fibers but not systemically toxic; and

injecting the agent for treating joint pain into a post-operative joint space as a one time application at a concentration entailing neurolysis.

Claim 2 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the neurotoxic substance is a local anesthetic ~~is predominantly toxic to pain-conducting (nociceptive) nerve fibers~~.

Claim 3 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim ~~1~~2, wherein the local anesthetic is less neurotoxic to motor and propioceptive nerve fibers than to sensitive nerve fibers.,

Claim 4 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim ~~1~~2, wherein the local anesthetic is used at a concentration larger than 4 %.

Claim 5 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim ~~1~~2, wherein the local anesthetic is used jointly with ~~an acidic~~ a pH-lowering additive ~~lowering the pH value~~.

Claim 6 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the pH-lowering additive is a bisulfite.

Claim 7 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the pH-lowering additive is sodium bisulfite ($NaHSO_3$).

Claim 8 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the pH-lowering additive is used at a concentration of at least 1 % by weight.

Claim 9 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the pH-lowering additive lowers the ~~agent~~ pH of the agent for treating joint pain to less than 3.5.

Claim 10 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is an amide.

Claim 11 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is lidocaine at a concentration larger than 6 %.

Claim 12 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is prilocaine at a concentration larger than 3 %.

Claim 13 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is mepivacaine at a concentration larger than 5 %.

Claim 14 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is bupivacaine at a concentration larger than 1.5 %.

Claim 15 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is levobupivacaine at a concentration larger than 5 %.

Claim 16 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is ropivacaine at a concentration larger than 2 %.

Claim 17 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is etidocaine at a concentration larger than 2 %.

Claim 18 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetics procaine at a concentration larger than 3 %.

Claim 19 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is chloroprocaine at a concentration larger than 3 %.

Claim 20 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is tetracaine, N-butyl tetracaine or ~~a~~ another substituted tetracaine~~, preferably N-butyl-tetracaine~~.

Claim 21 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein the local anesthetic is used at a concentration larger than 4 %.

Claim 22 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the local ~~anesthetics~~ anesthetic is used at a concentration larger than 8 %.

Claim 23 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein a mixture of at least two different local anesthetics is used together with a bisulfite or other pH-lowering substances.

Claim 24 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein a mixture of at least three local anesthetics is used.

Claim 25 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein a mixture of tetracaine and bupivacaine is used.

Claim 26 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is used in pure, enantiomeric form.

Claim 27 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the neurotoxic ~~substances belong to the following group: bisulfites, preferably alkali bisulfites~~ substance is a bisulfite.

Claim 28 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein a phenol or a phenol derivative inclusive of analogues and their pharmacologically acceptable salts ~~are~~ is used in addition to the local anesthetic.

Claim 29 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the phenol ~~derivatives belong to the group of cresols, in particular ortho-, meta- and para-cresols and their derivatives~~ derivative is a cresol.

Claim 30 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the ~~chloro-cresols comprise in particular~~ cresol is a chloro cresol selected from the group consisting of 2-chloro-m-cresol, 3-chloro-p-cresol, 4-chloro-m-cresol, 3-chloro-o-cresol, 6-chloro-o-cresol, 2-chloro-p-cresol, 5-chloro-o-cresol, 6-chloro-m-cresol and 4-chloro-o-cresol.

Claim 31 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the phenol ~~derivatives belong to the group of eugenols and their derivatives~~ derivative is a eugenol.

Claim 32 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the phenol ~~derivatives belong to the group of the thymols and their derivatives~~ derivative is a thymol.

Claim 33 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the agent for treating joint pain further comprises an x-ray contrast agent ~~is used in addition to the neurotoxic substances and~~ that contains gadolinium, iodine or barium in addition to the neurotoxic substance.

Claim 34 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the bio-compatible solvent is glycerin, and wherein the glycerin is used at a concentration of 10 to 95 % by wt in addition to the neurotoxic substances.

Claim 35 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein steroids are used in addition to the neurotoxic ~~substances~~ substance.

Claim 36 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a vasoconstrictor selected from the group consisting of Adrenalin, noradrenaline, phenylephrine and ornipressine, is used in addition to the neurotoxic ~~substances~~ substance.

Claim 37 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the neurotoxic ~~substances are~~ substance is dissolved in a biocompatible solvent~~, preferably in~~ selected from the group consisting of glycerin, iophendylate ~~or~~ and propyleneglycol.

Claim 38 (canceled)

Claim 39 (currently amended): ~~Application~~The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the agent further comprises dimethyl sulfoxide as a permeation enhancer~~, preferably dimethyl sulfoxide, is used in addition to the neurotoxic substances~~.

Claim 40 (currently amended): A method for treating post-operative joint ~~pains~~ pain, comprising:

~~wherein one local anesthetic or a mixture of several local anesthetics is injected~~injecting an agent comprising a neurotoxic substance dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent into the intra-capsular region or into the joint synovial pouch of the pain-afflicted joint as a one time application at a concentration entailing neurolysis~~, the local anesthetic or the mixture of several local anesthetics being dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent and the local anesthetic being selected from the group that is toxic to the axons and to the nociceptive nerve endings~~ wherein the neurotoxic substance is predominantly toxic to nociceptive nerve fibers but not systemically toxic.

Claim 41 (currently amended): The method for treating joint pain as claimed in claim 40, wherein the neurotoxic substance is a local anesthetic or a mixture of several local anesthetics ~~is dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent~~ and wherein a liquid volume of 0.1 to 150 ml of the agent is injected into the intra-capsular region or into the joint synovial pouch of the pain-afflicted joint.

Claim 42 (currently amended): The method as claimed in claim ~~40~~ 41, wherein the nociceptive nerve fibers are rendered pain-insensitive by the local anesthetic or the mixture of several local anesthetics for at least 14 days.

Claim 43 (canceled)